4. THE EARLY DAYS OF THE PARTY

Over and over again in his speeches Hitler has told the story of the early days of the National Socialist Movement: no collection of extracts from those speeches could omit a reference to that story which forms so large a part of the capital of National Socialist oratory. Some characteristic examples of those retrospective surveys have therefore been translated.

In his speech in the Hofbrauhaus at Munich (24 February 1935) at the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Founding of the Party Hitler said:

"When on the 24h of February 1920 I spoke for the first time in this hall, it was one thing which had brought me here, which gave me the courage to speak before this community *(Gemeinschaft):* faith in Germany, faith in the German people, in its good and imperishable values. And at that time such a faith was essential, for there could not have been a worse time for the founding of such a new movement than in those days"....

"No one had faith then in what he did. And yet in this bitterest of times we had faith in Germany.... It was the faith in that *other* Germany which then only slept, that lived again, and today celebrates its proud resurrection: the faith in the Germany of simple fellow countrymen, the faith in this people, which in its heart is such an amazingly decent people, which the politicians could not any longer see, because they moved only in their own circle which assuredly had lost all contact with the people. It was the Germany of millions of honest riflemen and grenadiers, of millions of honest women who had gone hungry through the War, who together had all bravely and loyally defended their homeland for four and a half years."

"It was perhaps fortunate that many of our number never dreamed of the length of time it would take to awake this Germany from her sleep. Many a one perhaps would have lost heart. But as it was we hoped on: from the first month to the second, from the first year to the second, to the third, fourth, fifth, and at last, with this hope and faith came the hour which we had longed for. And it had to come, never forget that!"

"When I then spoke for the first time our programme was the greatest challenge of the century, a challenge against this age, against the spirit of this age. It was a beginning of infinite difficulty. Who were we after all? Only nameless folk! Not one prominent personality amongst us, no politician, no parliamentarian. The dirt of the trenches still hung about us. All those who opposed us hurled their taunts at us: 'What do you want? You have absolutely no qualifications.' Only those who had brought Germany to disaster were 'qualified' in those days."

"Further, we lacked the unction of the politicians of that time. We had no capital. A Movement founded by men who had no name, a party founded without capital appeared like a limited liability company with no one to buy its shares. Someone had obviously to take part in the enterprise who had a name and capital — and we had neither. We had hardly a pfennig to our credit and all those who did really possess capital gave us a wide berth. They said 'Be off! you have not a name amongst you', and those who had a name said 'Away with you! — you have no capital'. And besides that we had no newspaper."

"The question was: How did we intend to become known at all ? To come before the public with nothing — without known names, with a programme that attacked everyone — it was an extraordinarily difficult decision to take. It needed a tremendous struggle even to bring the Movement to the consciousness of the German people. Folk objected to the harshness of our tone, the brutality of our fighting. They criticized our unpolished speeches. Does anyone think that in any other way we could have got the public to listen to us? We *had* to fight in this way; only so could we find our way to the ear of the nation. Further, in opposition to all the similar movements started at this time in Germany, I held the view that we should not unite with others, but forge our own way through. One did not dare at that time to trust oneself to any false solidarity; one could not say, 'After all they want the same thing as you do'. No, there must be *one* will in Germany, and all other wills must be mastered. For fifteen years we have held to this watchword and at the last that watchword has led us to complete and final victory."

"At that time people said, 'You are but a splinter party'. It is true, we were then a splinter, but that splinter was of steel and like a magnet it drew to itself the iron out of the nation. Beyond that nothing was of any account. And thus as a splinter-party at first we were hated by everyone. In a few years we were attacked on every side by all the other

parties. An Englishman said once, if you want to know whether a man is a genius, you have only to keep your eyes open and see whether the lesser fry do not suddenly band themselves together against him. If they do, this is the sure sign of the coming of a genius. And if you would recognize an important movement you have only to observe how the whole pack of mutually hostile parties suddenly take a hand in the game. If they suddenly unite, although according to their programmes they ought to be fighting each other, then you may be sure that they see a common danger approaching. And that is what we were able to notice only a short time after the beginning of our Movement."

There followed an account of the opposition of the "November-State" — how stupidity and malice stood united against the National Socialists: Hitler drew a picture of the time of the bloody terror and oppression, and of the cowardice of the bourgeoisie (only a summary is given in the Press report). "Then", *he continued,* "we dared to form our own organizations, organizations of the Party, and as their marching-orders we gave them a word from the Bible, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'" . . . and then at length came the hour of victory: "the victory of faith, the triumph of will."

In his speech at Munich on 8 November 1935 at the celebration in memory of the "Putsch" of 1923 Hitler said:

"For the twelfth time we are assembled here and with us, as we know, is the German people. We are met in a Celebration *(Feierstunde)* in memory of the day on which for the first time we sought to change the fate of Germany. The result of that attempt was sixteen dead, more than a hundred severely or slightly wounded, and a further result was the apparent annihilation of our Movement."

"If year by year we have celebrated this day — in the time of persecution not always in the same form — if we are determined in the future and for all time to make this day a Holy Day for the German nation, that is not because on it sixteen men died. Daily thousands die and wars destroy many more in an hour. It is because these sixteen men with a true faith in their hearts suffered a death which helped to raise up once more the German people. These sixteen men even before that had stood their ground, they had been in the Great War, many of them had been wounded once, twice, several times. They had already often looked death straight in the eyes. But in war it was different! Then the whole German people in arms faced its foes, while on the 9th of November 1923 only a small band arose against the annihilators of the Fatherland and the destroyers of the nation, against those who had sold and betrayed our people. It was much harder to find the resolution for that than formerly to march to the front. That went without saying for all of us; each stood his ground and all respected those who went forth to defend the Fatherland. In 1914 that was not difficult; on the contrary, the decision to go to the War was for millions an unheard of good fortune. The resolution of spirit which led men to take up the fight against those who were ruining Germany was far harder. In the War everyone knew in which battalion he had to march. These massed formations of the War were lacking in the domestic struggle. But in their place each had a faith which to those who come after may perhaps appear fanatical."

"One thing indeed I know: all decisions have been for me easier than the one which I made on the 8th of November 1923. For the first time one had the conviction that it was not one's personal fate which was at stake, but the fate of the whole German people."

"Our people had been more than heroic in the War. We know that; each one knows the bravery of his comrades. Each one of us who was then at the front knows what the German soldier achieved, and had to achieve. It is comprehensible: in the Great War every man more easily adapted himself to his task; thus for any war it is easier to gain a thousand volunteers than it is in time of peace to find ten men who must be prepared to die. There are only two extremes: either war — and then one knows that life has little value — or peace, and then each man wishes to enjoy peace in his own way. And the wonderful thing is this: that from the German people after that people's downfall at once men arose who refused to capitulate but were ready to set themselves in opposition to those who were ruining Germany, and that not only with the weapons of the spirit, but with their own breasts."

"And thus there came a time when each individual had to decide for himself whether he should enter the Movement. If we wished to reach our goal, that could never be through theoretical expositions and scientific treatises: we could not remain behind closed doors: we must meet our opponents face to face on the street, in the factory, at any other opportunity. Everyone who wished to join us knew what lay before him, and yet at that time a number of German men — each for himself — took the decisive step. That decision was all the harder because their

work was not surrounded by any halo of fame. While each man who took the field in 1914 and wore the honorable field-gray uniform could be assured of general respect, he who had put on the arm-band of the National Socialist could be sure that he would be ridiculed and taunted by all. That arm-band was then no sign of honor: it rested with the wearer to make it that."

"So the decision was doubly difficult, since it was not associated with any recognition from those without the Movement, but only with mockery and scorn. The *bourgeoisie* laughed at us and despised us. They were convinced that we were fit occupants for a madhouse, and were completely assured that for the present it was out of anyone's power to help Germany: perhaps the children might one day do something. We of the present generation had no other task than to accustom ourselves, with what dignity we could muster, to Germany's downfall and to accept the collapse."

"It was in very truth in the years 192O and 1921 no easy decision for any National Socialist to resolve to enter a Movement which was so far removed from all else in the Germany of that day. It was at this time that the Movement wrote upon its standard the words: 'Germany must live, even though we die.' The motto of the others was the exact opposite: 'We shall live, even though Germany is destroyed.'"

"We seemed to others to be purblind folk who knew not how to conduct politics, people without names, without property, without lineage. We know how at that time the little band grew, starting from this city. When today we let the years pass before our eyes in memory, it is a marvelous story that unfolds itself. We entered upon the fight with the criminals, a fight against a powerful majority, to struggle for our view of the world *(Weltanschauung),* a view of the world which even for ourselves at that time was perhaps rather dimly felt than clearly thought out in all its implications."

"1920: we announced our programme for the first time- and held our first larger meeting. Then this hall seemed to me ten times as big as it does today. We considered ourselves fortunate when it was sparsely occupied and when half of it was not merely gaping emptiness. Still in the year 1920, we could later hope for well-filled halls and could, for the first time, found a local center *(Ortsgruppe)* outside Munich. Then came the year "

`'1921. We were bolder in our appearances on the streets. When the *bourgeois* did nothing I took the decision — which to myself seemed utterly foolhardy—to summon a meeting to protest against the 'Diktat' of Paris, and for that meeting to hire the Circus Krone.' And afterwards I had some anxiety — suppose the Circus were not filled, what then? So I hired a lorry, put on it the first twenty members of the Party, gave each of them a flag to carry, and told them to drive with placards through the streets. From the business point of view it was extremely risky. Further, I had 20,000 broadsheets printed and they were distributed through Munich from this 'national-bolshevist' lorry. The *bourgeois* citizens looked on us with divided feelings. They thought of a revival of the Spartacist revolution: they were not able to conceive that there could be wide differences between Red and Red. The Reds, who saw things a little more clearly, were beside themselves with fury at this trespass on their domains. But when the evening came, the Circus was full. That was our first great gathering. And what an effort it needed to get to that point! Still masses of people streamed into the Circus and I had only some fifty or sixty stewards with whom I had to keep order in that gigantic building. However, order was maintained, and, lest the enthusiasm should cool down, I announced that we would shortly hold another meeting in the Circus. So the Party grew and in course of time we could hold two or three meetings in the week. We learned how to dominate the great halls of Munich. Then came"

"1922. But meanwhile there occurred the first great fight in the hall where we were meeting. Today we can laugh as we think of it, but then the existence of the Party was at stake. The others had intended to trample us underfoot. Perhaps they were smitten with blindness. From these battles arose our *Sturmabteilung (Storm* Section — the SA.)."

"With the year 1922 the Movement gradually spread beyond Bavaria. In other towns local centers were founded and whole districts, as our opponents said, were 'infected' by us. And one day for the first time we held a demonstration of the National Socialist Freedom-Movement on the present Königsplatz. For the first time we marched to the Königsplatz; we spoke there; for the first time from Munich we took a special train to Coburg, and there with terrific strength of arms we smashed the Red Terror to the horror of the *bourgeoisie* who neither wished to understand nor could understand our action."

"And then began this 'cleaning up' process, place by place, and our Movement grew, became stronger end stronger. It did not grow through men who have taken wisdom on lease, it was the masses who joined us first, the healthy elements in the people. If today a Stormbattalion of 1922 were to march through the streets everyone would ask, 'where have they been let out from?' That was the time when the majority came to our meetings without collars; they made a point of coming without collars. It was in this unparliamentary attire that we appeared before the public in those days. And even afterwards we remained very much of the people: and thus gradually—at least here in Munich—we became in fact so much a part of the people that the people could not any longer disown us."

"1923. When the year 1923 came it was obvious: *we* were the predominant Movement. In numbers, it is true, the others far surpassed us. But people did not see them. They did not leave their offices and their council chambers. They possessed vast resources. But those who marched through the streets were either the Reds — or ourselves; and no one else. And we began our marches: the SA. grew larger and larger. And thus the year 1923 ran the course which we all know."

"Already in the summer it was clear to us that on one side or the other in Germany the die must be cast. We felt at that time that we, although perhaps in numbers the weakest of the parties, were worth more than all the others. In the autumn, when events crowded one upon another, it became ever clearer that under the pressure of the occupation of the Ruhr certain unscrupulous scoundrels were trying after all to tear Germany asunder. Then there grew up amongst us, I may say with me, the determination that, if it should really come to this pass, then at least twenty-four hours before that step was taken we would seize the initiatives and would not wait until the other side should perhaps discover the courage to make up their minds — and to act. For one thing was clear: he who, in the inflation period, in this time of the collapse of everything and everyone, had the courage to come to a decision — he would have the people behind him. Had another [State] flag been raised, then the foreign Powers would have immediately declared 'We will no longer allow this "development of liberty" — this was the name given to the splitting up of Germany — to be once more checked by the attempt to restore the hegemony of one or other of the federated States.' That we knew. From this compelling consciousness of the fateful hour, and from the distress of this hour came with us the determination to act."

"I need not now betray the details. That I will do when I have ceased to live. Today it is not yet necessary for it to be known how precisely it came about. But I can quite dispassionately say: it was the most desperately daring decision of my life. When I now look back upon it in thought, I grow dizzy. The decision in one spot of Germany to open the attack and at one blow to take prisoner the whole of the enemy's forces — it was a bold decision just because it meant that with the means one had — and they were small enough! — one must have the courage to assume power. Yet this decision was necessary: it could not be escaped. No other action was possible. Someone in this hour *had* to oppose treason, *had* to set against these traitors the national watchword. It mattered not in the last resort *who* did it. We did it I made the venture."

"But Fate meant well with us; Fate did not allow an action to succeed, which, if it had succeeded, must in the end have suffered shipwreck on the internal unpreparedness of the Movement, on its organization which was then so faulty, on its inadequate spiritual foundations. Today we know that. Then we played our part only with courage and bravery: it was with wisdom that Providence acted. But this bravery in action has not been in vain; for from it arose at last the great national Movement, that is to say that through this explosion with one blow the whole of Germany had its attention called to the Movement. While our opponents thought that they had destroyed us, in fact the seed of the Movement at a single blow was flung over the whole of Germany."

"When the great prosecution came, then we had the opportunity for the first time of championing our ideals before a vast German and international forum. We scorned to say, as did the others, 'That was never our intention'; no, we said: 'Our aim was to destroy those who were betraying Germany. The only misfortune is that we have not succeeded.' At that time we solemnly declared: 'Ours is the responsibility, and that responsibility we accept. We have only one regret: that we have failed."

"When we stood to meet the charge in the first prosecution and fought our fight to the end, it went without saying — for all of us were leaders in the Movement — that each would admit his action and himself take full responsibility for everything. But one anxiety I did have. After us came some hundred members of the Party, small Shock-Troop men, members of single sections of the SA. They, too, were dragged before the judge. I was myself in prison when these trials began to run their course. And I had only one anxiety — that under the pressure of arrest,

questioning, and the whole method of conducting the trial one or the other might perhaps give way, might seek to save himself, and might plead 'I have been guiltless: I have acted under compulsion. I could not help myself."

"My heart overflowed with joy when I saw the first report of these trials, when I read in the *Munich Post* — which was sent to us at the time — "The men of the Shock-Troops are just as insolent and shameless as was their lord and master.' Then I knew that Germany was not lost. That spirit would gnaw its way through anything! Such a spirit they can no longer destroy. And out of these Shock-Troop men and these SA. men were later formed the greatest organizations of the German Movement — the SA. and the SS. And the spirit has remained: it has ever and again proved itself ten thousand — a hundred thousand-fold."

"That is what we owe to these men who died: the example which they gave in Germany in the darkest hour. For when in this city we marched out, we knew already that this was no longer a triumphal march. We went of the conviction that this was the end, in one way or another. I know of one who on the steps as we set out said, 'This is now the finish'. Every one in himself carried with him this conviction."

"And at this moment I must not forget to mention one man who today is not with us, whom at that time I begged not to march at our head, General Ludendorff, and who gave me as his answer 'I shall stand at the head' and who placed himself in the first line. That was the spirit which in spite of their presentiment inspired these men of our band. And when this blood had flowed, the first act of the German drama was ended. Nothing more could be done. For now the force of law stood, armed, against the German Movement for Freedom. And now of necessity came the realization that in Germany this way was closed to us: it was a thing of the past. And then comes the second immense service of those who fell. For nine years I had to fight under constitutional forms for power in Germany. Many others had already attempted this before me. But because they preached legality they gained for their movement only the weaklings, only the cowards. The revolutionary spirits, those who were prepared to act, stood outside of their ranks. If I had not in 1923 attempted to carry through this revolution, if I had not made the *coup d'état,* if blood had not then flowed, if so many had not died in the attempt, then it would have been impossible for me to say through all those nine years, 'From henceforth the battle will be fought only within the law' — or at least I should have gained only the half-hearted. It was only this which later gave me the strength resolutely to keep to this course which came to be recognized as the only right course to pursue. There were many who opposed me — we know it from the history of the Party — they objected, 'How can one keep within the law?' But I could say to them: 'Gentlemen, what is it you want? Do you want to teach me how to fight? Where were you when we opened our attack? I need no lessons from you on revolution or legality. I have been through all that long ago. You had not spurred up enough courage, so hold your tongues now!'

"Thus it was possible for me to build up a Movement composed of *men* who yet were prepared to follow the one, the only possible way. And to that we owe more than I can say. For we do not live alone in the world. About us are powerful States who regard every rise in Germany's fortunes with ill will. We can hold our own in face of them only if we are strong not merely in our own outlook on the world, but also in arms. And one thing was clear: we could not make Germany strong in arms if we destroyed the institution which supplies those arms: that institution, intact in its close-knit unity, must be reconciled with the National Socialist idea and with the realization of this idea, and thus we could found this new alliance which has made it possible for Germany to appear once more in all her strength before the whole world. That I saw at the moment in which the shots rang out here in this city. If you will read again my final speech in the great prosecution you will be in a position to say that as a prophet I foreshadowed the only possible way for progress in the future, that I have publicly declared what that way was and have resolutely followed it for nine years. I could thus follow it only because this action happened first, because previously men had died for this way."

"When yesterday a new war-flag for the Reich was hoisted, this was a highly significant event. Just think: over a period of some two thousand years we can follow the German people in history, and never in the course of history has this people possessed this single formation both in the conceptions of its thought and in its action which it possesses today. For the first time since Germans appeared in the world there is a single Reich, dominated by a single view of the world, protected by a single army and all that united under a single flag. In very truth, the cerecloths of these sixteen dead have celebrated a resurrection which is unique in the history of the world. They have become the banners of their people's freedom. The miracle is that from their sacrifice arose this mighty unity in Germany, this victory of a Movement, of an idea, and to this the whole people is pledged. And all that, the whole of our debt, is bound up with these first men. For if at that time I had found no one to step forward to champion the

cause of the Reich at the cost of their bodies and their lives, then in after years, too, this would have become impossible. For all those who later sacrificed their blood were inspired by the sacrifice of these first men.'

"It is for this reason that we raise them high above the darkness of forgetfulness and place them for ever in the great mindfulness of the German people. With these sixteen dead our foes thought that they had killed the National Socialist Movement, while in fact they have but awakened the blood-stream which from that day began to flow with an ever increasing force. Today this bond, the arm-band of those days, embraces the whole German people, embraces other Germans, too, far beyond the frontiers of the Reich. For today, wherever there are Germans — and that is again the wondrous fact — there men see no other sign of their unity than that sign which you, my fellow-members of the Party and my fellow-countrymen, even in those days bore on your arm."

"And it is truly a miracle to trace this development of our Movement. To posterity it will appear as a fairytale. A people is shattered and then a small company of unknown men arises and begins an Odyssey of wanderings which begins in fanaticism, which in fanaticism pursues its course. Only a few years later and already from these few men, from these unknown, nameless folk, numerous battalions have been formed, and again years later from these battalions regiments and divisions have been created: local centers have become districts *(Kreise)* and shires *(Gaue).* A few more years pass and this Movement sends many delegates into the representative bodies. And resolutely it fights its fight on the streets. Again and again new victims fall out of the ranks. Thousands are wounded, but none the less the stream grows in volume, and the Movement struggles through to power, and then it sets its standard over a whole State. A wonderful journey! History will record it as one of the most wonderful, one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of the world. It will seek for comparisons and analogies, but it will hardly find a parallel — that in so few years, from such a birth a whole people and its State could be completely conquered."

"This is the miracle which we have wrought. We are the fortunate ones, for we need not to learn the story from books: we have been chosen by Fate to live this miracle in our own experience. We, my comrades in the fight, can be proud that history has called us to such a mission. Many years ago I said to my followers: 'Perhaps one or another of you asks, "And what after all shall the reward be?" My party-comrade, some time the day will come, and when it comes, then you will be specially proud of this arm-band: on it you will inscribe the year in which your illumination came, and you will be happy to be able to say, "I was there since such and such a year".' That it is which unites us so closely, which welds us together. Posterity will one day learn the lesson, but we can say, 'We have been there; this is of our making!' "

"Other generations — they learn of sagas of heroes, of the expeditions of heroes: we have lived this saga, we have marched together on the expedition. Whether the name of any one of us is preserved to posterity, that matters not. We are all bound together in one single mighty happening. That will remain. That will never more fade away in Germany, and from the sacrifices of the first fighters there will ever come anew the strength for sacrifice. Therefore our gratitude towards those who first sacrificed themselves is imperishable. Imperishable, because the Movement is imperishable, and because the Movement must ever remember to whom it owes everything."

In the closing speech at the Nuremberg Parteitag of September 1934 Hitler said:

The Parties by the limited range of their interests could never hope to win the whole country: even parties with a programme apparently founded on a religious basis were in this position. "For instance the Center Party, however successful its political activity, could never hope to be able to win more adherents than the total number of the Catholics in Germany; that means that the Party, which was bound to definite confessional obligations, was on any human calculation incapable for all time of realizing its particular aims and wishes within the framework of a parliamentary democracy working on the principle of majorities except through the creation of such a majority, i.e. through compromises with other political groups whose programmes and aims must of necessity be opposed to its own and which in fact were partially so opposed. Social Democracy again fought for a programme which from the first in its Marxist-Socialist form contemplated only one section of the nation — the so-called Proletariat — as the object of its professed concern, and thus in exactly the same way was nailed down and fixed as but the representation of a minority. Here, too, so far as one could foresee, political leadership could be won only through the adoption of understandings in the nature of compromises with the other — in this case the *bourgeois*—parties. The firms which carried on a liberal and democratic policy addressed so small a forum of consumptive intellectuals that from the outset any belief that their parties could obtain a sovereign or exclusive power was out of the question. They were by their very nature dependent upon allies, and were prepared through compromise to pay for the help of

these allies, as best they might, by sacrificing some part of their own ideal."

The result of this system was "a parliamentary political truce" *(der parlamentarisch-politische Waffenstillstand). Hitler then went on to speak of the second group of parties — those which represented particular economic interests.* "Industry, commerce, agriculture, the middle class, shareholders, officials, employees, etc., were dragged into the political game of their own parties with the sole object of being able to stay the ruin of these classes which were incontestably necessary for the life of the nation"....

"The character of this our former world of political parties must be understood if one is to comprehend the meaning of this parliamentary democracy and vice versa: we can thus state

(i) that in these formations, despite all their talk, there was hardly a trace of a *Weltanschauung;*

(ii) that in view of the whole mental content of these parties and their composition they were incapable of ever awakening the interest of the nation for a single great aim or of winning for that aim the nation as a whole;

(iii) that they had not the least intention, in the interest of securing for the parties any higher idea or aim, to sacrifice those business possibilities which with their capitalistic skill it was not difficult for them to discover in the political divisions of the body of the people."

"It was, in consequence, to be expected that the tie which connected these parties with the people could only be a loose one, and such in fact it always was. Only in times of crisis did they suddenly recall to mind the poor elector and give some thought to him in assemblies gathered together with more or less skill or *naiveté.* For the rest it was the task of the Press to maintain the divisions of the people and to see to it that the wounds caused by these divisions were kept open. For *Parteitage* this mass of humanity was of no use. For at these gatherings there was no word about the party's *Weltanschauung:* it was only party tactics that were discussed, i.e. it was debated and decided how far compromise transactions could be concluded with the mass of the electors who were already committed to their differing outlooks on the world. So in the party gatherings, with their programmes, of course, carefully determined beforehand, there were frequent moments of tension when amongst the illustrious political leaders no unanimous decision could be reached on the assignment of duties or when some felt it prudent to adopt the presence of opposition in order not to lose those electors who were showing threatening signs of discontent. Nothing but imposture!"

The National Socialist appeal was fundamentally different from that of the Marxist and *bourgeois* parties and so was the Movement itself: "Even when it was only seven members strong it already proclaimed two principles:

(i) it wanted to be a party with a real *Weltanschauung,* and

(ii) it aimed at gaining sole power in Germany and that aim was to be realized without compromises."

" . . . When the National Socialist Party appealed for the first time to the German people it resolutely refused to pledge itself to champion the cause of any separate group which was committed to the support either of religious or economic interests within the nation: its appeal was from the first directed to the heroic instincts of the people. It did not set its hopes upon those who always consider only the advantage of their own business or keep in view the members of the group associated with them; the National Socialist Party looked to those idealists whom others so often mock as visionaries *(Phantasten)* who without regard to their own interests, with faith in their hearts, cling to their people and their Reich and are. ready if necessary to sacrifice their own existence to the eternal life of people and of Reich."

"This appeal could not be understood by the 'prominent leaders' of our old parties, because by far the greatest part of them had in their own hearts no trace of such a spirit. And just as they themselves before such a watchword stood without a glimmering of understanding, so they thought that they could safely prophesy that we should succeed no better with the people. And yet they were completely mistaken! For if the German people as a whole had been composed only of those values which in their own parties they considered for political purposes to be of use and service, then there would never have arisen a German people. For economic groups to be formed in the course of the centuries — in itself the condition for the rise of political parties representing similar interests — it was essential

that during thousands of years idealists should have created the foundations for the life of peoples and of States and thereby also created the foundations of economic life. For if it be true that the German people is composed of elements of which a great part cannot be regarded as originally capable of supporting, much less of creating the State, then the significance of that part of the people which out of this conglomerate of different races did in the end create a people which could win successes even in the economic sphere is to be rated all the higher and valued accordingly."

"And this part of the people has by no means disappeared; it lives still in our midst and that, too, in all social strata of the nation. It is not the product of any single stratum of society and certainly not to be identified with any such stratum. Least of all is it confined to that body which has arisen as the result of the economic development— the *bourgeoisie* — but it represents that racial core in which at all times in our people the State building capacity found its embodiment. It is the factor which maintains a type of character which is at once idealistic and heroic and also practical and ready for vigorous action. Thus often for decades it can pass unobserved in political life; it may appear to be entirely lost, particularly when weaklings and incapables hold the stage. But it once more comes into view as a living force directly those notes are struck which awake an echo in its own heart. When therefore the National Socialist Movement first sounded its battle-fanfare, immediately from all strata of the nation's life came the volunteers who were our first fighters"....

"Thus a new Party was formed, that is true; its membership was limited, but its leaders and its fighters were not to be measured by any economic standards: they possessed the essential quality of leadership. But the people which before then had grown hesitant, since it had been continuously betrayed by its own parties representing class, economic, and other interests, now turned with a sure instinct to those who, disregarding all economic limitations, simply on the ground of the value of their innermost conviction could rightly raise a claim to general leadership. And not only the people felt this instinctive attraction, but in the end the leaders and heads of this old party-world themselves shared that feeling. Unable to crush us, for half a decade they lived, now in the hope of a miracle, and now in fear of their own destruction. The only lucid intervals in their lives w ere those in which a dazed recognition of the danger of the National Socialist Party began to dawn upon them. Their artificial scorn of the Movement was but the attempt to stifle with mockery and laughter that recognition which held them by the throat"....

"Thus the minority of the National Socialist Movement as a Party cannot be compared with the former minorities of our opponents.... As a Party we were compelled to remain in a minority since we were mobilizing the most valuable elements in the nation — the fighters, those who were ready for sacrifice — and these have always formed not the majority, but the minority"....

"And because we were racially the most valuable section of the German nation, because we proudly valued ourselves as such, because we courageously, boldly demanded that to us should be entrusted the leadership of the Reich and of the people, the people in ever growing numbers joined us and acknowledged our leadership. Its innermost consciousness rightly told it that its better self had found in the National Socialist Party its point of concentration and its expression. Thus it was that our Movement as an 'historic minority' could grasp supremacy in Germany in understanding with and with the will of the overwhelming majority of the German nation. And as soon as the Government of the Reich was finally united with the leadership of the Party then there happened the miracle which most profoundly shattered the illusions of our foes."

"They all calculated, deceived by their own experiences, that after a few months of National Socialist government the German people would be disillusioned and return to its former party divisions.... But the German people after a year and a half has continuously devoted itself only the more completely to the Movement in the heart of which it recovered its best self, its best characteristics."

In his Speech on the Anniversary of the Foundation of the National Socialist Party delivered in Munich, 24 *February* 1934 *— an Address to the Old Guard on the early days of the Movement — Hitler said:*

"History is not made by changing names but by changing principles. New principles had to be formulated and only new men could represent these principles: new organizations must grow up from these principles. We were convinced that new forces must be won, forces which were present in the depths of the nation but could not until then be brought into action. Only one method was possible: to begin in a very small way to form the organizations which should support the new future — which became gradually a State within the State. In the eyes of the

bourgeoisie what seemed to be our heaviest handicap was that we numbered in our ranks not a single one of the former politicians who had great names.... For us and for the young Movement that was precisely our ground for hoping for a great future. The 'great' men of the past — they had for their activity already received their historic discharge; it was essential that the leadership of Germany's fortunes should now be taken in hand by quite different, young men, who were burdened by no past: and something else was necessary — that these men should come from the Front, from those who for four and a half years had represented German life at its bravest; not out of the stagnant swamp of our old parties could salvation come for Germany: it could come only from that part of the nation which had decently done its duty." Thus was formed the new Party, and from the first the decision was taken that there were to be no compromises and coalitions with the old parties. "The new Party had to be filled with the thought of its exclusiveness: it must be in fact intolerant. From the day of its creation it must formulate a profession of political faith, and it must be filled by the iron principle that it would suffer no political rival to exist in Germany. If the Party were to realize its aim, then it must create a new German people, a new community of the German people. From this conception the Movement must draw a new idealism: . . . it must also bring home to the German people that of which it had given proof as a people of soldiers during four years in the face of the world: for heroism is essential, not only on the battlefield but also on the soil of the homeland ". . . .

"In a few years we have shown doubters that our people possesses brilliant political organizers and admirable speakers. Some were always saying that the German never could learn how to unite with others; we could point them to the most united organization in the whole of German history. From the very outset it seemed to us essential to turn our backs on the so-called 'Upper Ten Thousand' and instead to appeal to the people. He who seeks loyalty and faith, confidence, fanaticism, and resolute devotion must seek them where such virtues are still to be found. And they are to be found only in the great mass of this people. There, only there, rules this faithful trust, this blind devotion, this loyalty, and this heroic courage in the championship of an ideal. And when someone from the intellectual class objected: 'You have not any "heads", how do you expect to become the masters of Germany's destiny?' then our answer was: It is far better to go without the apparent 'heads' and to have the people on one's side than to possess these 'heads' and to lose the people. He who knows only such 'heads' as these will soon find himself in an airless room. But he who can call a people his own will find that from the people new heads are constantly arising. Thus it is that in the course of a few years our Movement gradually drew from the millions of our people those who fought in the front rank for the new State, gave to unknown men a name, and saw them ripen into supporters of Germany's future, so that today, after not quite fifteen years, the Party is able to take in its strong hands the destiny of the people."

In his speech at the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the "German Day" in Coburg (15 October 1937) Hitler said: "Our prescription at that time ran: If you will not voluntarily allow us to speak, then we will compel you by force to do so. This fight of the force of reason against the democracy lasted for two days. And after two days this reason, supported by the will of a thousand German men, won the victory. And thus the battle for this town became a milestone in the history of our Movement. Acting on this prescription we cleared the way for the advance of the National Socialist idea throughout the whole Reich and thereby we won Germany.